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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 000436

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SUBJECT: CLC JOB PLANS WIN EARLY BACKING IN BAGHDAD

Classified By: Classified by Deputy Political Counselor Greg D'Elia for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Government of Iraq (GoI) officials won initial support from Baghdad Mayor Saber Al-Assawi and Baghdad Provincial Council Chairman Mueen Al-Khademy for two new employment plans for Concerned Local Citizens (CLCs) during a series of meetings in late January and early February. Both plans -- a "Community-Based Workers Program" and the establishment of the first local Civil Service Department -- aim to identify employment for the majority of those CLCs who will not enter the Iraqi Security Forces. Provincial Council Chairman Mueen stated that it will be difficult to press forward quickly on these programs, and expressed concern about the GoI's ability to sustain a large influx in the government workforce. Nonetheless, these plans, pressed forward with the Prime Minister's backing and in close consultation with Baghdad's provincial leaders, key ministry officials, Multi-National Division Baghdad (MND-B) and the Baghdad PRT, represent an important GoI step toward transitioning CLCs into sustainable employment in Baghdad.  
END SUMMARY.

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BIG PICTURE CONCEPT FOR CLC EMPLOYMENT IN BAGHDAD  
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¶2. (C) During a series of meetings in late January and early February, Dr. Bassima Al-Jadri (commonly referred to as "Dr. Bassima"), of the Interim Follow-Up Committee on National Reconciliation (IFCNR), explained the "Community-Based Workers Program" (CBWP) to leaders and stakeholders in Baghdad province, including Mayor Saber Al-Assawi, Provincial Council (PC) Chairman Mueen, representatives from key Iraqi ministries (health, education, and labor and social affairs), Baghdad PRT officers, and the Deputy Commanding General (DCG) of MND-B. Dr. Bassima said that the CBWP will establish six offices throughout Baghdad to focus on providing jobs to CLCs, starting in "hot" neighborhoods where high levels of violence persist. The program will hire qualified local residents to refurbish infrastructure and to provide essential services. According to Dr. Bassima, the CBWP has the full support of Prime Minister Maliki.

¶3. (C) Dr. Bassima also announced that a new (yet to be established) IFCNR Office of Contracting will help place CLCs in the ministries. She added that while skilled workers will move much more easily into these jobs, unskilled workers will be added as they complete vocational training. Officials in the Baghdad Mayor's office, the Provincial Council, and IFCNR agreed to continue to work out the details, including the mechanism for hiring and paying these workers.

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PILOT PROGRAM SMALLER IN SCOPE  
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¶4. (C) Dr. Bassima also discussed with Baghdad leaders the second CLC transition plan -- a "Proof of Principle" project

to establish the first local Civil Service Department (CSD) in the Jihad neighborhood of west Rashid district. The 4/1 ID Brigade of MND-B, which has responsibility for this area, developed the CSD program in collaboration with IFCNR to assist the Baghdad Amanat and national ministries in the provision of services, including sewage, trash, electricity, and water.

15. (C) The Jihad CSD will be the first of 11 planned CSD offices in East and West Rashid districts. Each CSD will employ 395 workers, most of whom will be hired from a pool of more than 7,900 CLCs in these areas. Salary rates will be based on GoI pay scales. Each CSD compound will have an office, maintenance facility, and equipment, such as office computers, bulldozers, and backhoes. The Jihad neighborhood prototype will provide an opportunity to identify those aspects of the CSD program that need adjustment prior to implementation on a broader scale. Dr. Bassima said that IFCNR will apply lessons learned from Jihad to the other CSDs in Rashid District as they begin operation.

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PC CONCERNS, IFCNR ASSURANCES  
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16. (C) Chairman Mueen stated in a January 30 meeting about CBWP and CSD that it will be difficult to press these programs forward quickly, and he expressed some reservations regarding IFCNR's ability to do so. He also voiced concern about the GOI's ability to sustain increasing numbers of government workers. Dr. Bassima responded that she had a directive from the Prime Minister to carry out the CBWP, and that it would serve as a temporary transition for former CLC security personnel for at least one year. She said that she

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would like some of the workers, especially those with relevant skills and background, to integrate into various ministries.

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COMMENT: GOI EMPLOYS CONSULTATIVE PROCESS  
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17. (C) COMMENT: By beginning to build a constructive partnership with Baghdad's provincial leaders, key ministry officials, MND-B and the PRT, the GOI has taken an important step toward implementing new efforts to transition CLCs into sustainable employment in Baghdad. Mayor Saber heads the powerful Amanat, which provides most of the essential services to residents of Baghdad's nine central districts. PC Chairman Mueen controls budget allocation for the province. The Amanat, the PC, and the ministries thus have critical roles to play in coordinating the CBWP and CSD initiatives with city and rural planning. Amanat, PC and ministry officials can help to hire and support CLCs who seek to work on essential services, housing projects, and other public sector jobs throughout Baghdad province. (NOTE: Mutli-National Corps Iraq began January 25 to refer to CLCs by a new name, "Sons of Iraq" (SOIs). END NOTE.) END COMMENT.

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